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Conclusions and recommendations of the Peacebuilding Commission on the situation in Burundi

Observations

1. The Peacebuilding Commission raised concern over the withdrawal of Palipehutu-FNL from the mechanism established to implement the 2006 Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement in its conclusions and recommendations dated 21 September 2007.

2. The Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission's Burundi configuration participated at a meeting convened by the South African Facilitation in Cape Town on 22 and 23 February 2008, at which the Programme of Action to Take Further the Burundi Peace Process was discussed. The Facilitation has since presented the Programme of Action to the Government of Burundi and Palipehutu-FNL.

3. The Peacebuilding Commission welcomes the active and continued engagement of the African Union, the Regional Peace Initiative for Burundi and the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB). It welcomes the renewal of the mandate of the South African Facilitation until 31 December 2008. The Peacebuilding Commission commends their renewed efforts to get Palipehutu-FNL to resume their participation in the implementation mechanisms of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, namely the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism.

4. In addition to the Mechanism, a Political Directorate, comprising a representative of the Facilitation, the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi, the African Union Special Representative for Burundi, the Ambassadors to Burundi of Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and South Africa, a representative of the European Union and representatives of the Government and Palipehutu-FNL, has been established. The Political Directorate, to be based in Bujumbura, will facilitate dialogue on any political obstacles that might arise during the implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement,

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promote trust between the parties and help implement any political arrangements they reach.

5. Despite positive developments, concerns have been raised over recent violent incidents in Burundi, such as the clashes at Gatumba on 29 February and grenade attacks against four parliamentarians on 8 March. The African Union, BINUB and the Secretary-General have all issued statements expressing concern and calling on the parties to bring the perpetrators to justice without delay and work together through national democratic institutions to ease the current tensions. The Government of Burundi also issued a statement condemning the grenade attacks and indicating its commitment to investigate the attacks and protect the population.

Conclusions

6. The Government of Burundi and Palipehutu-FNL bear the primary responsibility for the full implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement and the conclusion of the peace process.

7. The Facilitation, the Regional Peace Initiative, the African Union, the United Nations and the international community are working together to create propitious conditions for the full and expeditious implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement.

8. There is consensus among the international community that the political, security and socio-economic reintegration dimensions of the peace process must be addressed simultaneously to ensure the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement.

Recommendations

9. The Peacebuilding Commission recommends:

To the Government of Burundi

(a) That the Government of Burundi continue to explore all ways to resolve its differences with leaders of Palipehutu-FNL with the aim of addressing them politically, as outlined in the Programme of Action, and take the measures necessary to build confidence and create the conditions for the return of Palipehutu-FNL and their reintegration into national institutions;

To Palipehutu-FNL

(b) That Palipehutu-FNL resume its participation in the work of the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and its subsidiary structures and participate in the work of the Political Directorate in Bujumbura, in accordance with the timelines outlined in the Programme of Action;

To the Government of Burundi and all relevant stakeholders

(c) That the Government of Burundi and all relevant stakeholders continue dialogue with a view to resolving differences and work together through national democratic institutions to ease the current tensions;

To the Facilitation, the Regional Peace Initiative, the African Union and the Political Directorate

(d) That the Facilitation, the Regional Peace Initiative, the African Union and the Political Directorate continue to help ensure the full implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement signed on 7 September 2006 within the 30 June 2008 time frame, in accordance with the Programme of Action, and allow for the monitoring by the Political Directorate of the political and socio-economic reintegration, as stipulated in the Programme of Action for the time period July-December 2008;

To the Secretary-General

(e) That the Secretary-General continue to play a robust political role in support of the peace process, in full coordination with regional and international partners, including through BINUB;

To the Security Council

(f) That the Security Council continue to monitor closely the situation in Burundi, in particular with respect to the effective implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, and consider, if necessary, appropriate actions with a view to the effective implementation of the Agreement;

To the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council

(g) That the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council provide support, as appropriate, to the Programme of Action and the efforts currently being undertaken by the Facilitation and the Regional Peace Initiative;

To donors and other partners

(h) That donors and other partners stand ready to support the Government's efforts, including the financing of incentives for the socio-economic reintegration of FNL and other demobilized combatants.

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10. The Peacebuilding Commission remains committed to paying close attention to developments in Burundi, in particular to monitoring progress in, and risks for, the consolidation of peace.